

Recent meetings

After the usual Summer break, when we had three meetings at members' houses, the main season started in September with "new acquisitions". Two weeks later we had another evening for members to display their own material. This evening of cinderallas was quite a challenge. Gwen Hussey had some cuttings from stamp magazines showing Hussey Post stamps of New York. She had never seen originals of these unusual items. This provided a challenge for me to find some. Ebay Auctions came to the rescue and two weeks later I duly presented her with two of the original labels.

The most popular meetings are those with visits from other clubs. The first of these this season was from Cardiff, although by then we had already been to Barry and Bridgend. At the end of October, Colin Lewis displayed material from his Newfoundland collection. Colin had recently returned from Canada, where he had won a gold medal. It was easy to see why from the selection he showed to our members. Two weeks later, Peter Coldrey brought along his Ardishaig and Glasgow steamer mail and some entertaining stories. Early in September, four of us also visited the Thornbury club. Gwen showed pigeons, Dennis showed some Gibraltar censor mail, Alistair brought his Rhodesia and John Perry showed a run of Danish West Indies material.

Stamp fairs

The Newport club had a table at the South Wales Federation Autumn Fair that was held in September in Barry. The next South Wales Convention is on 4 May 2002 at the usual location of Port Talbot. The final Cardiff fair for 2001 is on 8 December at the City Hall. From 2002, the fair will be organised by Pete Robards, Avis Moule and Martin Tizzard. The first City Hall fairs in 2002 are scheduled for 5 January, 23 February, 20 April and 15 June.

Chris Doble's final Dragon fair of 2001 is on Friday 7 December at the Jury's Hotel in Cardiff. The fairs will continue in 2002

Ann Scott holds her Christmas Postcard Fair in Bristol at the BAWA Centre on 1 December. The first fairs of 2002 are on 2 February and 30 March. Spring Stampex is from 27 February to 3 March 2002, clashing nicely with Philatex (28 February to 2 March).

Social Philately Competition

The June 2001 Newsletter gave details of the planned Social Philately Competition. This is on 23 January 2002. So work hard on this over Christmas. This is an experiment. All members are asked to display 8 sheets on the subject. Given the limitations of space, the sheets will need to be the usual size and things that will not fit on a sheet are not allowed. You can include photographs or photocopies of items so long as you state that the original material is in the collection. Other than that, there are no restrictions and the prize will be a bottle of wine.

The British Philatelic trust has recently asked Pat Grimwood-Taylor (Cavendish Philatelic Auctions) to set up some web pages within the UK Philately web site. Unfortunately, this will not be until 2002.

So here are the only guidelines and rules that you will have:

A social philately exhibit consists of material that can be included in other philatelic classes as well as non-philatelic items that are directly related to the operations and products of a postal system. That means everything must have some form of connection with the postal service.

Displays for which up to 50% of the display may comprise the non-philatelic items with 10% of the display being items connected to social not to postal history:

Telegram services, greetings cards, illustrated envelopes, post office stationery, philatelic libraries, official documents with pictures of stamps, PHQ cards, aspects of the effect of the postal system on industry (possibly meter-marks), studies of a locality.

Other displays:

Philatelic history (such as hinges, perforation gauges), objects associated with postage stamps (stamp boxes etc), post office equipment.

Marks are awarded as follows:

Treatment (20) and importance (5 philatelic/ 5 social)	30
Philatelic & related social knowledge, personal study and research	35
Condition (10) and rarity (20)	30
Presentation	5

Annual competition

The usual competition, from which the winners go forward to the South Wales Convention, takes place on 6 March. For this evening we hope to have judges from the Thornbury club. Members will recall that Ian Baillie told us recently how not to lose (too badly) at stamp competitions. Please make a special effort to bring along entries of 16 or 8 sheets.

Part 2 of the judging seminar organised by the South Wales Federation is scheduled for 16 March. This is only for those who attended the first part earlier this year.

Odds and ends

One of the most interesting sets of stamps in recent years came from Royal Mail. It is not often that I praise our post office but the Nobel Prize stamps issued on 2 October 2001 are quite special: heat sensitive, combined lithography/ intaglio, embossed, scented, micro-printing and holographic printing techniques define this unusual set.

I received a request recently for a postmark from Newport showing a kingfisher. I have tracked this down to a special hand-stamp prepared by Benham for the British Waterways issue of 20 July 1993 but have not seen a copy. I have a copy of the Royal Mail postmark from Caerleon for the day of issue of the Roman Britain stamps (15 June 1993). There is also a Benham special hand-stamp for that issue but I have not seen a copy.

January 2002 should see a rush of stamps from most European Union countries with the advent of the Euro. But the UK still yearns for the good old LSD. A few weeks ago, Anne went to the post office and asked for a book of 10 2nd class stamps. "You'll have to have 6 or 12" was the reply. "I thought we'd gone decimal!" Anne said. "But they're self-adhesive" was the final reply that silenced her.

Computer world

Stamps related web sites are growing fast, although few clubs have their own web sites as yet. It is also now possible to order catalogues direct from the publishers and some of those are even on CDROM. The hobby is ideally suited to computers, more so than any other: it is international; postage costs are low for stamps so they can be sent anywhere; and cataloguing and writing up collections is easy using computers.

The best auction site (Ebay): pages.ebay.com

The best way to find sites of interest (Joe Luft): www.execpc.com/~joeluft

The UK philately site: <http://www.ukphilately.org.uk/>

John Perry, Honorary Secretary

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Our web site: <http://www.perry60.freemove.co.uk/>